

APPROVED: Meeting No. 5-91

ATTEST: *Sharon Gran*

MAYOR AND COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND
Meeting No. 4-91

February 4, 1991

The Mayor and Council of Rockville, Maryland, convened in Worksession in the Council Chamber, Rockville City Hall, Maryland Avenue at Vinson Street, Rockville, Maryland, on February 4, 1991, at 7:35 p.m.

PRESENT

Mayor Douglas M. Duncan

Councilmember James F. Coyle

Councilmember Viola D. Hovsepien

Councilmember James T. Marrinan

ABSENT

Councilmember David Robbins (Travel Leave)

In attendance: City Manager Bruce Romer, Assistant City Manager Rick Kuckkahn, Director of Finance Kevin Deckard and City Clerk Sharon Gran.

Re: Budget Issues

The City Manager noted that the purpose of this session was to preview the FY92 budget with a focus on issues rather than monies. The City Manager and staff will provide a briefing on the issues the various departments will be confronting. The goal is to use the meeting to capture the Mayor and Council's goals and aspirations so that these may be reflected in the recommended budget which will be presented on April 15.

In a briefing on the economic outlook, the Director of Finance noted a substantial decline of 26% in retail sales during the past year, primarily in the automobile and furniture industries. Some of the other economic issues discussed were:

Meeting No. 4-91

2

February 4, 1991

office vacancy rate of 20% in the Montgomery County area with sufficient space now available to meet the projected demand for the next three years; an increase in property tax revenues of 8% as a result of reassessments; likelihood that state and county funding will be cut, thus jeopardizing the police protection, youth services and stormwater grants. Councilmember Coyle asked how many employees may be affected by the loss of these grants and was advised that the police protection grant is not associated with positions; however, the youth services grant could impact five employees.

In response to Mayor Duncan's question as to how the projected debt conforms to the financial guidelines adopted by the Mayor and Council two years ago, the Director of Finance responded that the projections are within the established parameters.

City Manager's Office

Current programs highlighted were: mass transit incentive program (PARC-IT); office waste recycling program; new telecommunications system; enhanced State legislative programs; enhanced Citizen Service Request System.

It was noted that the Wellness Program is being expanded to the Gude Drive facility and that future issues for this department include: enhanced communications between citizens and City government; increased intergovernmental cooperation; development of long-range strategic legislative plans; enhancement of neighborhood orientation to departmental services delivery; and continuation of professional development for staff.

Discussion followed regarding the County's proposal to levy a parking tax and whether such legislation would automatically apply within the City of Rockville. It was noted that such legislation would apply in the City with revenues going to the County. Staff was requested to report back on the current status of this legislation.

Regarding an earlier report on volunteers, Councilmember Coyle asked if staff has followed up on this issue in the City of Rockville. The City Manager reported that

Meeting No. 4-91

3

February 4, 1991

his office will be working with the City Clerk in the development of a registry for City volunteers.

Police Department

Chief Treschuk reviewed the department's current programs and activities including:

- o continued implementation of neighborhood oriented policing;
- o aggressive pursuit of National Police Accreditation;
- o expanded commitment to East Rockville neighborhood substation (including a change in work hours to provide more coverage and the siting of offices for the officer assigned to the D.A.R.E. program and the Community Services Officer at the substation);
- o implementation of the Bicycle Patrol, Officer Tuttle, Speed Indication Sign, D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) programs;
- o continued implementation of Business Watch Program (with the assistance of the Explorers);
- o expanded directed patrol deterrent program;
- o handling of 11,000 calls for service;
- o upgraded communications equipment;
- o maintaining commitment to Municipal Drug Task Force;
- o maintaining high level special event coverage.

Future issues discussed were public safety issues emanating from the continued rebirth of the Town Center area (Town Center security patrols, expanded business foot patrols, traffic congestion, etc.) and any decreases in county police services due to budget constraints which may increase the City's present workload and calls for service. Chief Treschuk emphasized the high level of cooperation the City shares with the County Police Department.

In response to Councilmember Marrinan's question regarding the impact on the

D.A.R.E. program with proposed cutbacks in County funding, Chief Treschuk noted that the department works with MCPS for the workbooks but that it would be a policy decision of the Mayor and Council as to whether or not the program would be continued in City schools.

With respect to the bicycle helmet law and any perceived budget implications, Councilmember Coyle was advised that the City's role would be in the nature of an educational program consisting of flyers, etc.

Finance Department

The current programs highlighted by the Director of Finance included:

- o operational studies - fleet, grants, temporary personnel;
- o direct debit for utility bills;
- o post-tax day care, out-of-pocket health care;
- o fiscal notes program;
- o local area network (LAN) for animal licensing and police personnel;
- o upgrade of budget document.

The operational cost of the new phone system was cited as a factor influencing the FY92 budget, and future issues were described as:

- o coping with budgetary constraints stemming from slow economy;
- o technological change;
- o Linowes Commission;
- o increasing complex benefits issues;
- o dealing with financial issues of a "mature community"

Discussion followed regarding the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Certification which the City hopes to reclaim for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1990.

Meeting No. 4-91

5

February 4, 1991

Recreation and Parks Department

The Director of Recreation and Parks provided the following department overview:

- o forestry/horticulture continued its expanded emphasis with the city tree inventory completed and the gypsy moth program continuing;
- o ten special events and fifty community events;
- o Civic Center utilization increased with an 80% occupancy rate;
- o Swim Center began its "two pool" program;
- o Redgate Golf Course's popularity continues to increase;
- o Playgrounds, classes, camps and sports at highest level in five years;
- o senior programs, transportation and trips at an all time high with 2,000 Senior Center members and three Senior buses.

Factors influencing the FY92 proposed budget are:

- o increase of 30% in school use fees and a 15% increase in transportation;
- o costs for non-English speaking population;
- o pay rate increase to returning temporary employees;
- o private sector revenue support will be extremely low.

Future issues included:

- o resident (and business) versus non-resident issues will increase;
- o daily versus annual fee problems at Swim Center;
- o Parks/Public Works facility requires expansion;
- o Civic Center study will have programming costs;
- o recreational programming growth in areas of seniors, teens and disadvantaged;
- o lack of facilities will limit expanded programming;
- o arts will face stiffer competition from social demands;
- o replacement of facility and parks equipment must continue in order to avoid

higher maintenance costs.

Councilmember Hovsepian was advised that new facilities conform to the handicapped accessibility standards and that the handicapped accessible program will include some of the City's parks. Regarding the replacement/enhancement of playground equipment in the City's parks, Councilmember Coyle was advised that the program is in its final stage.

Mayor Duncan requested that staff ensure that non-resident fees cover costs in the Rockville Baseball Association (RBBA) program.

Community Services Department

The FY91 overview of this department included:

- o development of an information campaign aimed at unregistered child care providers;
- o expanded multi-cultural outreach efforts in Hispanic and Asian communities;
- o outreach and health care for the homeless;
- o expanded summer food service program to include a family shelter;
- o conducted educational seminars on parenting, teen suicide, self-esteem and divorce and family;
- o planning intergenerational program involving seniors in the care of unsupervised children.

The Department is requesting a part-time child care specialist position for FY92. Factors influencing the proposed budget include:

- o implementation of Child Care Task Force recommendations;
- o cutbacks in government funding;
- o recent amendment to City's Human Rights Ordinance to include sexual preference and presence of children;
- o recent passage of American with Disabilities Act;

Meeting No. 4-91

7

February 4, 1991

- o increased needs of homeless population;
- o increase in referrals from outside agencies including schools.

Future issues include:

- o affordable housing;
- o initiation, continuation and expansion of affordable and accessible child care programs;
- o continuation of substance abuse education and prevention activities.

Councilmember Coyle was advised that the department follows a residency requirement in connection with shelter referrals, that is, an individual's last known address must have been Rockville. In response to his question regarding the ability of handicapped individuals to secure or retain employment, Councilmember Marrinan was advised that the department plans to do some outreach in this area.

Community Development Department

The FY91 overview included:

- o reorganization of the Department of Community Development;
- o initiation of the City's Economic Development Plan;
- o continuation of the Town Center and Small Business Roundtables;
- o enforcement of building, property, sign and zoning ordinances;
- o commencement of Town Center Pedestrian Study;
- o completion of Town Center Traffic Study;
- o strengthening of business/City liaison;
- o emphasis on neighborhood preservation.

Staff training and development was emphasized, particularly in the areas of inspector certification and historic preservation. Factors influencing the FY92 budget include:

- o continued emphasis on Town Center development;

Meeting No. 4-91

8

February 4, 1991

- o neighborhood preservation concerns;
- o affordable housing/development and preservation;
- o economic/fiscal concerns;
- o business/city interrelationships;
- o historic preservation issues;
- o environmental/quality of life issues;
- o CDBG administration;
- o Housing Authority assistance.

Small business retention/development was cited as a future issue.

Personnel Department

An overview of the department included:

- o hiring of a Safety Administrator, Personnel Administrator, Personnel Technician and Secretary II;
- o creation of new physical office space;
- o developing and improving programs and corresponding policies such as performance evaluation, merit system, non-smoking, etc.

Priority is being given to cross-training and assignment of specific areas of responsibilities to assure sound program management.

Factors influencing the FY92 budget are:

- o on-site training in areas of safety, supervision, etc.;
- o more proactive approach to recruitment, screening and affirmative action;
- o promotion of the Employee Assistance Program;
- o implementation of comprehensive safety and loss prevention program.

Future issues mentioned were expansion of the role of the Personnel Department in the areas of Affirmative Action, recruitment, labor relations and benefits and establishment of new policies and procedures to accommodate the needs of the City and its employees.

Meeting No. 4-91

9

February 4, 1991

Councilmember Coyle was advised that the department has a sufficient budget for employee training and development and tuition assistance.

Public Works Department

The department's current programs include: recycling newspapers; hazardous waste and bulky waste collections; ice control/snow plowing; leaf collection; wetlands problems; Water Treatment Plant testing.

Factors influencing the FY92 budget are:

- o implementation of Refuse SUPER SERVICE, Phase 2 (commingled materials);
- o contract for recycling;
- o train professional/technical staff;
- o prepare for Water Plant changes.

Future issues cited were:

- o increasing Federal and State mandates;
- o aging infrastructure;
- o improving City services while reducing costs.

Outside Agency Requests

Although the deadline for outside agencies to submit applications for FY92 funding has not yet arrived, the City Manager noted that the refinement of the application process and the development of guidelines approved by the Mayor and Council have considerably improved the process.

Fire Tax District Proposal

Discussion followed regarding the proposal by the County to transfer the Rockville Fire Tax District properties into its Consolidated Fire Tax District. The tax impact of this proposal to various types of property in the City was highlighted.

It was noted that the County Council is expected to introduce this legislation on February 5, to be followed by a public hearing and adoption subsequent to April 1,

1991. Mayor Duncan requested that staff monitor the legislation and that civic associations and other organizations to be affected by the legislation, such as the Chamber of Commerce, I-270 Partnership, etc., be notified of the County Council's public hearing date. It was agreed that the City would prepare a mailing to affected parties and hold a meeting to discuss this issue. Rockville Reports should be used for publicizing the proposed legislation and informing residents of its impact.

Re: Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, the meeting was adjourned at 10:10 p.m., to convene again in General Session at 7:30 p.m. on February 11, 1991, or at the call of the Mayor.